

***The Message* by Peterson is a Blasphemous, Divisive, Vain and Dangerous Work**

by Jeremy James



Eugene Peterson (right) with 'Bono' (Paul Hewson) of the rock group U2.

The Enemy never rests. He has no Sabbath. It never occurs to him to gaze on his wicked achievements, his manifold works of darkness, and not feel a deep urge to enlarge upon them: **“...who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied” (Habakkuk 2:5.)**

He hates the Father, and Jesus His wonderful Son. And he hates the Holy Spirit. He hates all the works of God and His redemptive plan for mankind. Among the many things he hates, there is one – visible and tangible – that must irritate him intensely. This is the book which every person on earth can hold in their hand and say, “This is truth!”

Satan despises the Word of God and has ALWAYS sought to corrupt it. If he has a slogan it is, “Yea, hath God said?” (Genesis 3:1)

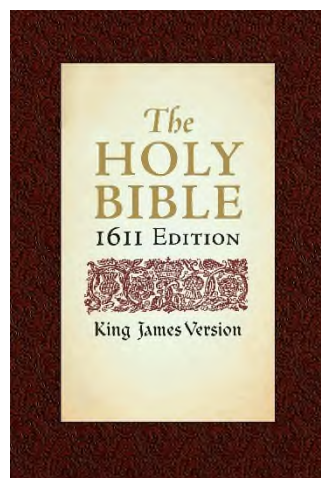
As the Adversary, his attitude is forever adversarial. Wherever God’s Word is spoken, he will try to contest it, twist it, and bend it, however slightly. In this he is relentless.

The multiplicity of Bible translations

This is why we have seen an explosion in the number of Bible ‘translations’ over the past century or more. Even the best of them have serious defects, just as “**that old serpent**” intended.

A high-powered team of academics will work for years on a project, producing learned papers and monographs, just to change a line of Scripture. By constantly chipping away at God’s Word, all under the phony guise of “scholarship”, they have been able to create translations of ever diminishing quality.

This subterfuge has been supported by influential Christian leaders who take real satisfaction in this progressive erosion of God’s Word. They tell us that no translation is perfect; that words change their meaning over time; that a literal translation is bound to lose some of the original meaning; that every language is unique and can only be translated by someone who knows its peculiarities; that linguistics, by its nature, is an art and not a science; that only those who understand the roots of the original words are qualified to decide what they really mean; that some words have no equivalent in translation; that the meanings of some words can only be known through a study of their social context; and so forth.



They like to argue as follows: The Bible must undergo continual translation if we are to fully explore and understand its incredible depths; literal translations must be rejected; ongoing discoveries in linguistics, archeology, sociology, philology, cultural anthropology, and related fields must be continually assimilated into the ever-evolving hermeneutic framework that we use to study and interpret the Bible.

Is any of this true? Of course not! It’s all hogwash. The whole scheme has been dreamt up by those who hate the Word of God and are determined to tear it apart. They see it – rightly – as the main barrier between the existing world order and the totalitarian system that they are planning to impose.

They have been working steadily to shake the confidence that believers have traditionally placed in the literal truth of the Bible, in particular the Authorized or King James translation of the Bible. They want to raise doubts about its inerrancy, its all-sufficiency, its authenticity, and its God-breathed verbal accuracy.



We should have known

Even if we had never studied what they are up to – with all its duplicity and cunning, its pseudo-academic legitimacy and mock scholarship – we would still be certain that such a program must be well under way. The notion that Satan would fail to undermine God's Word in this fashion is contrary to everything the Bible tells us about his character and his methods. If he is to succeed in his ambition to deceive mankind and rule on earth via his 'anointed', the Antichrist, then he must find a way to wean men off God's Word and 'nourish' them instead with a modified or counterfeit version of truth.

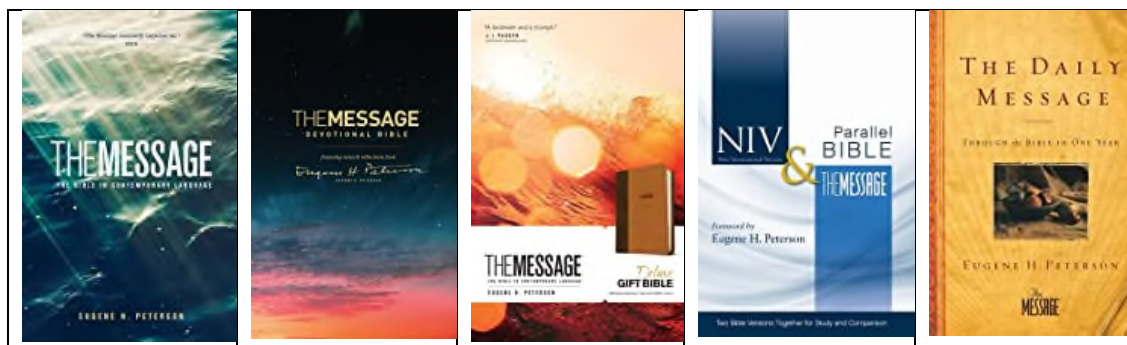
Are his earthly servants planning to suppress the Bible by defiling it to the point where no-one can use it, or do they intend to go further and produce a ‘translation’ which effectively embodies a counterfeit version of ‘Christianity’? The coming One World Religion, which the Vatican is working hard to introduce, would be easier to implement if it could retain the Bible, albeit in a greatly debased form, rather than have to devise and market a suitable replacement.

Up to twenty years ago, the latter seemed highly unlikely. It hardly seemed possible to produce a popular ‘translation’ of the Bible which was so skewed that it undermined certain basic truths of Christianity and at the same time managed to make some aspects of paganism appear ‘Christian’.

The Message

Any doubts we had were dispelled with the exceptional growth in sales of a strange new ‘translation’ which first appeared in 2002. *The Message, The Bible in Contemporary Language*, was compiled by Eugene Peterson, a Presbyterian minister and theologian.

Peterson based his approach on two novel assumptions. Firstly, he assumed that the Bible, as given, was easy to comprehend and that its meaning was fully understood by those who received it more than two thousand years ago. Secondly, the reason parts of it are allegedly difficult to understand today is due to an over-reliance on literal translation which results in a text that lacks the immediacy and vitality of our modern vernacular. It should be possible, he reasoned, to take the intended meaning – which theologians and scholars already know and understand – and express it faithfully and accurately in our modern idiom so that anyone, not just scholars, can immediately grasp the truth of God’s Word.



The first assumption is doubtful, but the second is certainly fallacious. We have no way of knowing whether it is possible take God’s words and, having extracted in full the meaning they contain, re embody that meaning in a completely different set of words. Indeed, Psalm 119, which speaks at length about the immutability of God’s Word, implies that it cannot be done.

The Bible also tells us that the meaning in God's Word cannot be imparted by any means other than through "the foolishness of preaching." In fact, it tells us that it pleased God to convey the message of salvation in this way:

**"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased [*Gr. eudokeō*] God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."
(1 Corinthians 1:21)**

The world by its wisdom cannot know God, and neither can it take what God has given us – the wonderful message of salvation – and convert it through its own stream of wisdom into something else.

Had pastor Peterson understood the Word of God, he would have known that his entire enterprise was built on a lie.

Duplicity from the outset

The Message was originally described – on its title page – as 'The Bible in Contemporary Language.' While some of his defenders tried for a time to portray his work merely as a "paraphrase", there is not the slightest doubt that it was always intended to be seen as a legitimate translation of the Bible. A commentary on the Bible, of which there are many, is also a paraphrase to some extent, but no author of a commentary has ever tried to maintain that it was anything other than a commentary. Peterson, however, is asserting that *The Message* **is** *The Bible in Contemporary Language*, where the language in question is contemporary idiomatic English. According to the author, the publisher, and its numerous supporters, it can be used in place of any other translation currently in use in our churches, such as the KJV, ESV or RSV.



Henry Savile's apartment at Merton College, Oxford, where the Gospels, Acts, and the book of Revelation were translated for the Authorized or King James version.

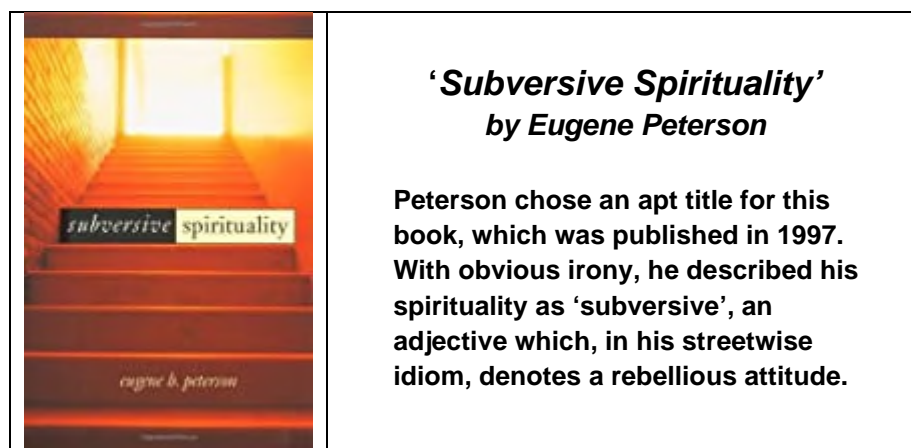
There are basically two ways to translate the Bible, formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. The first, which is often called literal translation, strives to achieve a strict or formal correspondence between the words of the original and the words employed in the translation. Dynamic equivalence, on the other hand starts, not with the words and grammatical sense of a proposition, but primarily with the meaning, or – critically – what the translator *thinks* it means.

Dynamic equivalence may work satisfactorily when translating a work of fiction but it is highly problematic when dealing with non-fiction or works of a philosophical nature. Unless he knows exactly what the author meant, the translator risks adding to or subtracting from the intended meaning. He may even distort or contradict it.

Peterson's method of translation

What sets Peterson's version apart from all other translations is his extreme use of dynamic equivalence. Where other translators kept a careful eye on the literal translation while in the process of formulating their 'dynamic equivalent', Peterson seemingly decided to ignore the literal version entirely. Instead he examined the text in the original languages (Hebrew, Greek, and a small amount of Aramaic) and asked himself how the same author, if he were alive today, might have expressed the same concept or idea to a streetwise English-speaking audience.

All translations of the Bible that use dynamic equivalence are flawed since they ignore what God has plainly said. They replace His words with their own, relying on verbal formulations that better fit their worldly perspective. Peterson's translation was produced using a turbo-charged version of the same methodology. He took liberties of a kind which no Bible translator of the past 150 years would have dared to consider. He adds words to the text, removes words from the text, invents emphases and connections where none exist, summons images that distort the meaning, and glibly pursues a brand of theology which is difficult at times to distinguish from neo-paganism, mysticism, and pantheism.



In his book, ***Subversive Spirituality***, which was published in 1997, Peterson shocked many when he revealed his low opinion of God's Word:

“Well, why do people spend so much time studying the Bible? How much do you need to know? We invest all this time in understanding the text, which has a separate life of its own, and we think we're being more pious and spiritual when we do it... Most Christians know far more of the Bible than they're living. They should be studying it less, not more. You just need enough to pay attention to God.”

We can almost hear the Serpent hiss.

This man was a rebel. He had no fear of God and little or no respect for the Word of God. He disdained any mode of scholarship that might have limited his desire to produce a translation that was unlike any ever made. He wanted to break fresh ground and create a work that would send shock waves through the church.

Beneath a mask of false humility, we find a man of exceptional arrogance, someone who believed he had the right to do as he pleased with Holy Scripture, who felt he was entitled to pick the Bible apart, word by word, and restate it entirely from his own point of view. It is difficult to see how he differed in any respect from the “grievous wolves” whom the apostle Paul warned about.

The Message is a vain and pretentious enterprise. Over the following pages we will show that it is also a blasphemous, divisive and dangerous work, strewn throughout with errors of every kind and craftily designed to cause confusion.

The LORD

The Word of God brings us ever closer to its author by referring to Him by name as LORD or Lord about 7,700 times (Some commentators give a higher figure). For example, His covenant name, YHWH, is translated ‘LORD’ around 6,540 times in the KJV; *Adonay* is translated ‘Lord’ about 430 times; *Adon*, where it refers to God, is translated ‘Lord’ 31 times; and *Kyrios* is translated ‘Lord’ nearly 670 times.

In contrast, when referring to God, *The Message* uses the word ‘Lord’ only 60 times. Yes, sixty. Six-zero.

“In the Northwest Semitic languages—Ugaritic, Phoenician, Hebrew, Amorite, and Aramaic—the word *ba'al* signified "owner" and, by extension, "lord", a "master", or "husband".” - Wikipedia

On the other hand, over the course of the Old Testament, Peterson refers to God as 'Master' more than three hundred times! When one considers that the name 'Baal' has three accepted meanings – lord, master, and husband – the persistent misidentification of Baal/Master with the LORD God is a matter of great concern.

What is Peterson up to? Why on earth would anyone want to refer to the LORD God in this way? It makes an unsettling impression to come across it so many times. For example, in Ezekiel, the expression "God, the Master" is used 175 times!

The so-called Ascended Masters

To fully understand his obsession with the word Master, we need to see how it is used in other religious and spiritual traditions. The word Master is employed throughout the New Age and neo-pagan movement to designate a man or woman who has attained a spiritual state known as 'god-realization'. A Master is therefore a perfected man or woman. He can leave his body and travel in the "inner worlds", visit any realm of heaven, commune with the Great Architect of Freemasonry, the Ungrund of metaphysics, the Absolute of the mystics, the Brahm of Hinduism, the pulsating Void of Buddhism, and the many projections of deity – 'the gods' – found throughout the 'higher' spiritual realms. He can also meet and converse with other Masters, including the so-called Ascended Masters of Theosophy who, according to Helena Blavatsky and Alice Bailey, are supervising the evolution of life on earth. They are supposedly guiding mankind toward the great shift in consciousness that will occur only when certain essential preparations have been made by these quasi-divine beings.



An artist's rendering of the Ascended Masters

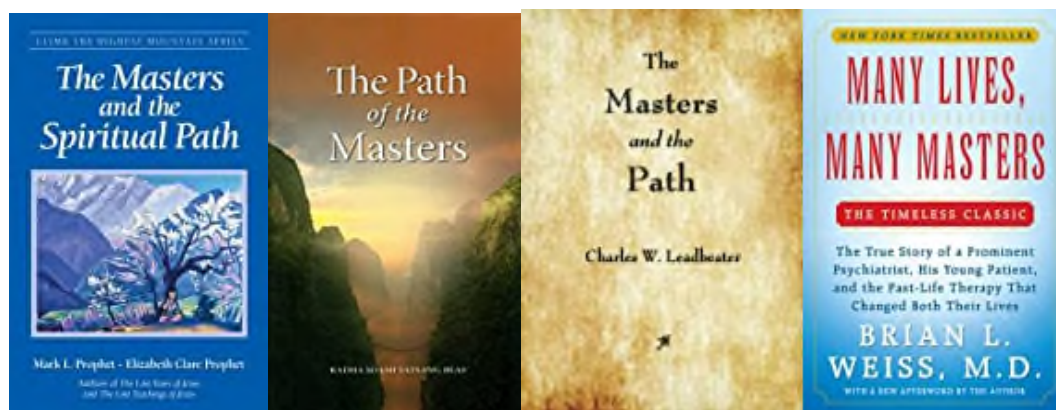
In the New Age movement and throughout almost all branches of Gnosticism, mysticism, and the Rosicrucian/Cabalistic tradition, it is widely believed that the Masters can vary greatly among themselves in power and authority, depending on how "advanced" they have become. Many acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth as a Master, though not as lofty or "advanced" as some of the great Masters who transmitted their teachings to Madame Blavatsky.

It is difficult for a born-again Christian, who has had no direct contact with these ‘paths’, to appreciate just how incredibly bizarre and delusional they are! Satan has woven a fabulous tapestry of lies to lure mankind away from God, lies laden with promises and allurements so convincing – to our fallen nature – that they hold most of their victims in bondage for their entire lives.

Through the wonderful freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, and through the light and love that he pours into our lives, we are able to see through these highly seductive illusions and recognize that they all have their common origin in Satan himself.

The term ‘Master’

As a concept, the term ‘Master’ is immensely important in the occult and pagan world. It promotes the ancient promise that man, too, can become a god. He too can enjoy the cosmic power and creative potency of a divine being. All he has to do is follow the Path of the Masters!



By attaching the term ‘Master’ to the name of the LORD God, and dropping the word ‘LORD’, Peterson is narrowing the gap between ‘God’ and the ‘Ascended Masters’ and implying that they are in some way related.

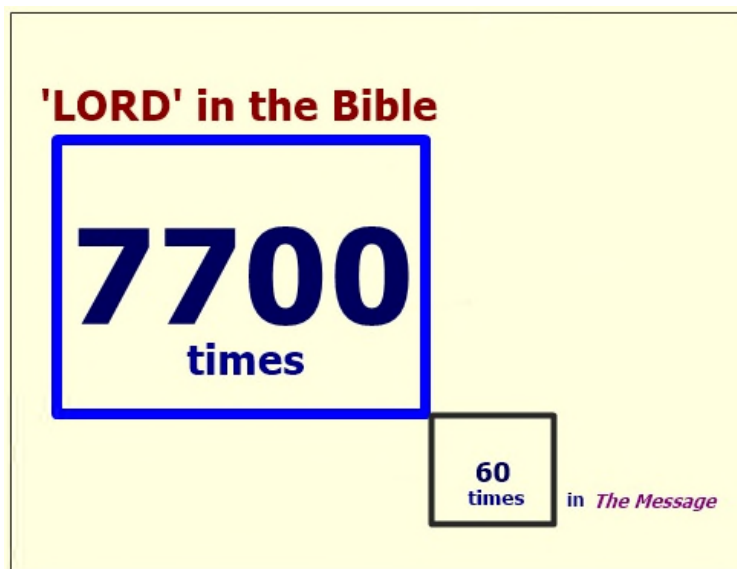
Is Peterson doing this deliberately? Certainly! He couldn’t possibly have gone down this road without knowing where it led. It is no accident that the name Baal can be translated Master, the very name he gives to the LORD!

We need to ask whether Peterson came from one of the many generational Luciferian families across Europe and America who send one or more of their children to work in Christian religious institutions. Their goal is to destroy Christianity from within. The Jesuits have long boasted that they have used this technique to undermine what they call ‘Protestantism.’

For many decades the so-called evangelical church in America has been under the control of people like this, double-agents who serve Baal while pretending to feed the flock. This explains the appalling lack of Biblical leadership in the church today, the tacit acceptance of abortion and homosexuality, the widespread use of mock worship called CCM, the ongoing march of ecumenism, the growing popularity of contemplative prayer, and many other apostate practices.

It is not surprising, then, that most Satanists refer to Lucifer as “the Master.”

Wiccans do this also. As one modern witch put it, “Each one [member of the coven] devoted themselves to “The Master:” a god who could take on many forms, including animal and human.”



During an interview at a symposium in Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, California in 2007, Peterson revealed that he had wanted to use the word ‘Lucky’ instead of ‘Blessed’ in his translation of the Beatitudes:

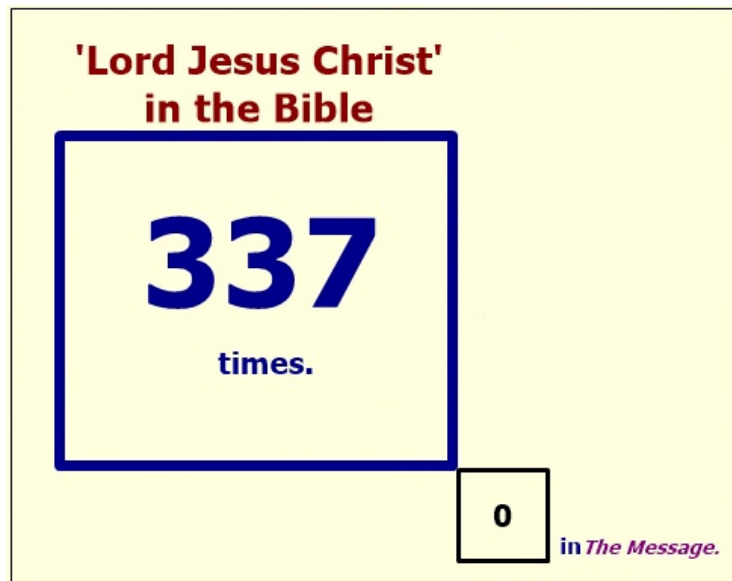
“I wanted to use the word ‘Lucky’ in the Beatitudes; ‘Blessed’ sounded too religious...I like ‘Lucky’. D’you know why I like ‘Lucky’? [*He tells a story about a woman in his church who explained to him why she really liked the word ‘lucky’.*] Suddenly the word ‘Lucky’ had a Biblical sound to it...So I tried to put it in the Bible, and my editor said: “Eugene, you can’t do that. There’s a whole sub-culture out there that thinks ‘Lucky’ is a nickname for Lucifer.” And that just trashed the whole thing, just because of Lucky. So, I had to give up.”

How could anyone think of the word ‘Blessed’ in these terms, and even try to put it in the mouth of Christ? For a Luciferian, however, such a blasphemous distortion of God’s mercy would sit perfectly with his or her philosophy.

The Lord Jesus Christ

Many readers of *The Message* will focus on only one passage at a time and fail to notice the patterns that run through the text, patterns which could never have arisen by chance.

For readers of the King James Bible, which shows immense respect for the person and deity of Jesus, *The Message* is a slap in the face. While the KJV refers to the “Lord Jesus Christ” 337 times, *The Message* fails to do so even once.



Please think about this. How is it possible to remove all 337 references to the incarnate deity of Jesus unless the translator and his editors were determined to purge them from the text?

Furthermore, the words “Jesus Christ” are found 546 times in the KJV, but only 112 times in *The Message*. Peterson and his team saw fit to retain only 20% of them!

Incredibly, never once does it associate the word ‘Lord’ with the words ‘Jesus’ or ‘Christ’.

If we ended our examination of *The Message* at this point, we would be fully justified in concluding that it is a blasphemous work, a sinister and misleading translation designed to diminish the incarnate deity of Christ.

If we add to this his systematic refusal to respectfully acknowledge the LORD God – by failing, thousands of times, to use His true name – we can see that we are dealing here with the spirit of Antichrist:

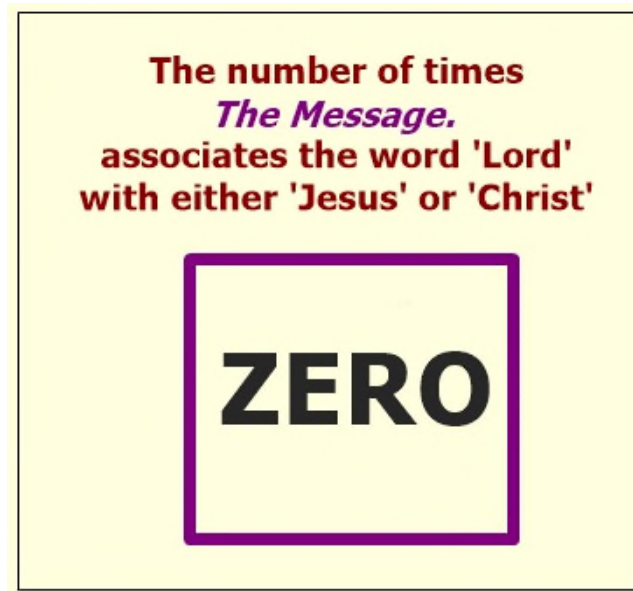
**“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?
He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”
– 1 John 2:22**

**“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the
flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have
heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”
– 1 John 4:3**

**“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who
confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.
This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”
– 2 John 1:7**

Mister Twister

Peterson plays so many games with God’s Word that it is hard to know what exactly he is trying to say at times. He often resorts to vague and imprecise words and expressions to hide the fact that his ‘translation’ is sloppy, inaccurate and misleading. Most readers will not have sufficient Bible knowledge to call his bluff or to realize that he is ‘translating’ only part of the original verse and leaving out key words. He will even add words and sometimes entire phrases, over and above the original text. In short, he shamelessly exploits the poor level of Bible knowledge among many Christians today to put across a ‘translation’, verse by verse, which believers of an earlier generation would have dismissed as trash.



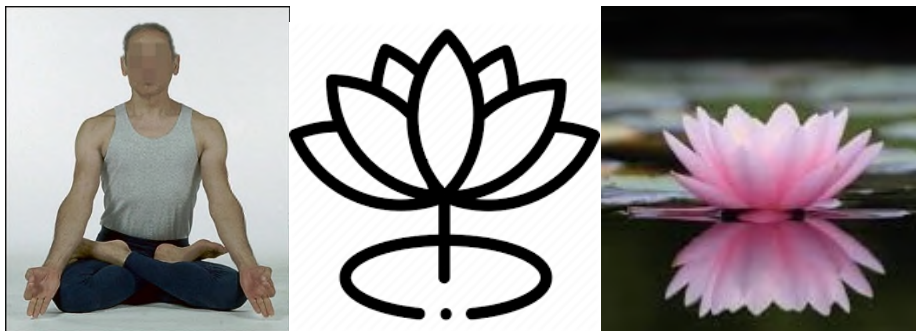
Of course, Christians today should have been warned by their pastors. They should have been told that *The Message* is a profane and dangerous work. But they weren't. (We'll return to this question later.)

A treasure trove of treacle and tripe

In a paper like this we are unable to address every aspect of Peterson's divisive and heretical work. We would like to have space to deal with the many elements of Christian doctrine which he patiently picks apart. We have already seen how he blasphemes the name of the LORD and belittles the person and deity of Christ. But many other Biblical themes suffer a similar fate.

A wealth of error is concealed behind slick and folksy prose. His treatment of sin is shallow and evasive; the prospect of hell and damnation is not taken seriously; the nature of holiness is never adequately conveyed; grace is reduced to divine caprice; the distinction between justification and sanctification is lost; the concept of atonement is muddled and confused; and the whole area of obedience, ethical conduct, morality, and sexual behavior is addressed in such a cavalier and opinionated way that readers who seek a liberal interpretation are sure to find it.

On top of all this, as many commentators have noted, Peterson uses words and images in his 'translation' which are so far removed from the lexicon of the Bible and so heavily burdened with inappropriate meanings and coloration, that they are bound to cause confusion. Some of these have clearly been chosen from the argot of the New Age, such as *One* (for God), *Oneness*, *wholeness*, *initiation*, *age-after-age*, *age after age after age*, *chanting*, *divine guardians*, *Bread of the Presence*, *Life Light*, *light-giving*, *light-bearers*, *light-seeds*, *light from the golden circle*, *God colors*, *God-craft*, *threefold name*, *lotus blossom*, *centered in lotus land*, *life-giving energy*, *energies of prayer*, *as above so below*, and *the God of green hope*.



Lotus posture - Lotus symbol of meditation - Lotus flower

Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God

There is one doctrine, however, which we need to explore in more detail since it is central to our understanding of Christianity. This is the incarnation of the Son of God. As the apostle John tells us, any attempt to corrupt this doctrine is clear evidence that the spirit of Antichrist is at work.

We could offer a great many quotations from *The Message* to show where Peterson stands on this crucial topic, but we'll confine our examination to the following specimens. They make the point well enough.

1 Timothy 3:16

KJV: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

MESSAGE: "This Christian life is a great mystery, far exceeding our understanding, but some things are clear enough: He appeared in a human body, was proved right by the invisible Spirit, was seen by angels. He was proclaimed among all kinds of peoples, believed in all over the world, taken up into heavenly glory."

Peterson makes an elementary mistake when he interprets the word "mystery" to mean something too difficult to comprehend (As he says, "far exceeding our understanding"). A mystery, rather, is the revelation of something entirely new and not previously revealed. Paul proceeds to list the elements of this mystery, all of which are grounded in the incarnation of the Son of God. While they show how the church came into existence, they do not speak of "this Christian life" (whatever Peterson means by this).

- casting doubt over the deity of Christ

When we combine his translation of this verse with his translation of Colossians 2:9 [see below] we have a picture of Christ, not as the Son of God, but as something else. The deity of Christ is no longer affirmed:

Colossians 2:9

KJV: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

MESSAGE: "Everything of God gets expressed in him, so you can see and hear him clearly. You don't need a telescope, a microscope, or a horoscope to realize the fullness of Christ, and the emptiness of the universe without him."

The apostle Paul is telling us that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. Eugene Peterson is not.

He even deepens the insult by saying that one does not need a “horoscope” to perceive Christ. The Word of God condemns astrology as witchcraft, so it is blasphemous to insinuate that some believers might think they needed witchcraft to “realize the fullness of Christ”.

John 1:14

KJV: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

MESSAGE: “The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.”

Why would anybody take a wonderful verse like John 1:14 and treat it in such a flippant and disrespectful way? What is even meant, in this context, by “Generous inside and out, true from start to finish”? That could apply – and has been applied – to many kindly sinners in earlier generations. This would suggest that when Jesus “moved into the neighborhood” he was an ordinary guy, just like us, only better. Peterson can’t bring himself to say that Jesus was “the only begotten of the Father”.

He also makes a serious mistake when he says that “We saw the glory with our own eyes”, as though everyone in the neighborhood saw it. John, the author of this epistle, saw it. So too did his brother James, and the apostle Peter – all three on the Mount of Transfiguration. The apostle Paul also saw it on the road to Damascus, and Stephen saw it at his martyrdom, but NO ONE else saw it. It was not revealed even when Jesus was ascending into heaven.

- Jesus is portrayed as a guru-master

Peterson is treating Jesus like a god-realized guru or Master, who beneath his cloak of flesh is supposedly radiant with the light of the One. From time to time, during their lengthy sessions of meditation, his devoted followers, “centered in lotus land”, are expected to see this alleged ‘glory’ with their ‘inner eye’.

John 10:30

KJV: “I and *my* Father are one.”

MESSAGE: “I and the Father are one heart and mind.”

Once again we see Peterson playing his little games. Jesus said, “I and the Father are one” [The KJV translators put a word in italics when it did not appear in the original text, the *Textus Receptus*. They used the word ‘my’ in this instance, but ‘the’ is also appropriate.]

However, Jesus did NOT say “I and the Father are one heart and mind” – though this is pretty much what a god-realized guru or Master would have said!

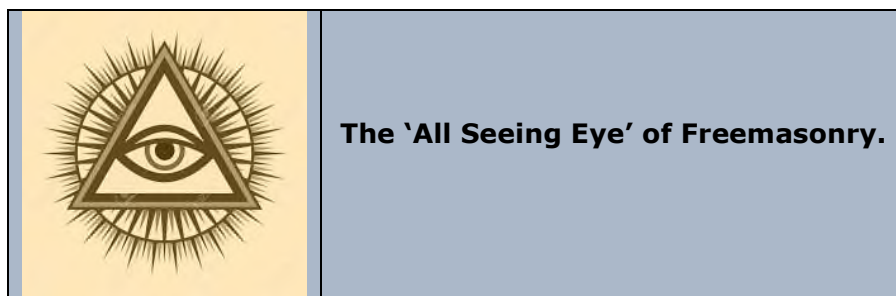
1 Peter 1:2

KJV: “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”

MESSAGE: “God the Father has his eye on each of you, and has determined by the work of the Spirit to keep you obedient through the sacrifice of Jesus. May everything good from God be yours!”

This is a verse about the wonderful plan of Redemption – in which all three Persons of the Holy Trinity are mentioned – but it is reduced by Peterson to an ongoing act of God in which everyone participates. By framing his translation in this way he skips over three important truths in the original.

Firstly, the Elect alone are sanctified, according to the foreknowledge of God. We are speaking here of a plan that preceded the whole of Creation, a plan which the Bible itself delineates in awesome and commanding terms. But Peterson tries to make us believe that this profound truth is captured by his innocuous formula – “God has His eye on you.”



Secondly, the Elect are sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Without that sanctification they are lost. But Peterson skips over this crucial fact, preferring instead to open the door by default to universal salvation – where everyone is saved because God “has His eye” on them.

Thirdly, the cleansing power of the blood of Christ is simply ignored. It is unthinkable that a Christian should deliberately omit this important detail.

- Peterson suggests that Jesus is not fully God

Philippians 2:5-8

KJV: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

MESSAGE: “Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human! Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death – and the worst kind of death at that: a crucifixion.

His treatment of this passage of Scripture is deeply troubling. I would urge readers to look carefully at the translation in the KJV and meditate on its meaning. The Holy Spirit chose the original words – which are faithfully translated in the KJV – to convey to our limited understanding the step taken by the Son of God when he added a human nature to his divine nature. He did not limit himself in any way by doing this, but was willing to accept as part of his being a nature which had in-built limitations. In doing so he did not set aside or lose any aspect of his divinity. He took on “the fashion of a man”, “the form of a servant”, and “the likeness of men” so that, by his death, he could save mankind.

Compare this with Peterson’s version. If we forget for a moment what we already know about the Incarnation, we can see that anyone using his translation to learn about this subject would immediately run into difficulties. Readers would take it to mean that Jesus willingly gave up his divine nature and assumed instead a human nature. Then, “having become human, he stayed human.”

Peterson underscores this alleged loss by calling it “an incredibly humbling process.” This is mischief-making of a high order. Peterson’s wording is designed to create confusion and cast doubt over the deity of Christ.

- the vital word, “everlasting”

Micah 5:2

KJV: “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that it to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”

MESSAGE: “But you, Bethlehem, David's country, the runt of the litter – From you will come the leader who will shepherd-rule Israel. He'll be no upstart, no pretender. His family tree is ancient and distinguished.”

Here Peterson sets aside all subtlety and engages in a shameless piece of skulduggery. When he says, “His family tree is ancient and distinguished”, he affirms a fact which no-one would dispute, namely that the Messiah came from an ancient and distinguished family line. But that is NOT what the prophet Micah is talking about here. The wording in the KJV – “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” – accurately captures the truth of the original. The Holy Spirit is telling us that, not only would the Messiah be born in Bethlehem, but that he has always been active in the affairs of mankind, while the word “everlasting” tells us that he has always existed. Since he is eternal he is divine and one in substance with the Father. But Peterson tries to suppress all this.

John 3:16

KJV: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

MESSAGE: “This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.”

Here we have another example of the way he plays with the word “everlasting,” which is one of the most important in the Bible. It is primarily through the use of this word that we understand the eternal and irrevocable nature of our redemption. Only an outright heretic would tamper with it.

In the KJV translation of John 3:16 – one of the best known and most often quoted verses in the New Testament – we find glorious confirmation, not only of our eternal redemption, but of the unfathomable price that had to be paid to secure it on our behalf. The verse truly honors our Lord Jesus Christ and the magnitude of his achievement. So why does Peterson turn “everlasting life” into something which, by comparison, is virtually worthless – “a whole and lasting life”?

It is striking that Jesus addressed this very question: “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36) If we phrase the Lord’s question a little differently we can see how it relates to Peterson’s translation of John 3:16: “Why would anyone want to gain a whole and lasting life [*the whole world*] if it meant losing everlasting life [*his own soul*]?”



It is unsettling to see how determined Peterson is to bludgeon even those verses which most Christians have long been familiar with. Presumably he was working on the basis that, if nothing familiar remains in his translation, even longtime believers will be willing to tag along and see where it leads. *The Message* is designed, not only to impart a false teaching, but to weaken a believer’s confidence in what he already knows. He never strays far from the Serpent’s *modus operandi*, “Yea, hath God said?”

Luke 3:22

KJV: “And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.”

MESSAGE: “...and the Holy Spirit, like a dove descending, came down on him. And along with the Spirit, a voice: “You are my Son, chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life.” Son of Adam, Son of God”

The correct translation abounds with beauty and grace, referring in a single verse to the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity.

The Peterson, version, however is filled with poison.



In 1 Timothy 3:6 we are told that Satan fell under condemnation because of his pride: "...lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Pride is the essence of rebellion and is not associated anywhere in God's Word with the Holy Trinity, and yet Peterson puts the words "pride of my life" in the mouth of the Father, and even implicates His Son.

It is very pleasing to Luciferians to attribute to God, by whatever means possible, the sin of Satan. No matter how tiny or insignificant the attribution may appear, it is enough – in their opinion – to vitiate any right that God may have to judge Satan. But there is no pride whatever in the Holy Trinity and any attempt to claim that there is, however small it may appear, is grossly blasphemous.

- "Son of Adam"

The other great source of poison in Peterson's version of Luke 3:22 is his reference to Jesus Christ as the "Son of Adam." This is another example of the craft and cunning behind certain key passages in *The Message*, where words are added or removed to produce something entirely new.

His term cannot be reconciled with the following two verses from 1 Corinthians:

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
(1 Corinthians 15:22)

"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living
soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit."
(1 Corinthians 15:45)

Christ, "the last Adam," undid the appalling damage caused by the first Adam. The first Adam brought death and damnation, while the Last Adam brought redemption and everlasting life. Christ cannot be called "Son of Adam" as he had no Adamic nature, a nature soiled by sin. By using this term Peterson effectively denies the sinlessness of Christ and disregards entirely the vital distinction made by the apostle in 1 Corinthians.

Consider also the following verse:

Jeremiah 31:22

KJV: “How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.”

MESSAGE: “How long will you flit here and there, indecisive? How long before you make up your fickle mind? God will create a new thing in this land: A transformed woman will embrace the transforming God!”

Those six words, “A woman shall compass a man”, are deeply prophetic. They tell us about a future event, an event unlike anything that has ever happened before (“a new thing in the earth”), which will address the entire problem of mankind’s rebellion (“backsliding daughter”). A woman, of herself, will give birth to a male child. This, of course, is the virgin birth. A sinless boy-child, whose father is God, will be born to a daughter of Adam.

Contrast this with Peterson’s version, where a transformed woman will embrace the transforming God. But where is the child? *Where is the child?*

It is through cunning devices like this that Peterson wreaks havoc on fundamental elements of Christian doctrine.

The Sovereignty of God

While much of his bile is directed at the Messiah, he also takes the opportunity where he can to qualify or constrain the sovereignty of God. Here are just two examples:

Psalms 75:1

KJV: “Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.”

MESSAGE: “We thank you, God, we thank you – your Name is our favorite word; your mighty works are all we talk about.”

Hosea 5:15

KJV: "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early."

MESSAGE: "Then I'll go back to where I came from until they come to their senses. When they finally hit rock bottom, maybe they'll come looking for me."

Psalm 75:1 is one of the most important verses in the Bible since it tells us that God is known to all mankind through His works. This connects it directly with Romans 1:20 – "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:" Psalm 75:1 also tells us that God is close to mankind through His works, a truth that may be found also in Acts 17:27 – "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:".

Now compare the correct translation of Psalm 75:1 with Peterson's version; "We thank you, God, we thank you – your Name is our favorite word; your mighty works are all we talk about." Notice how the wily imposter succeeds in erasing these two wonderful truths.

Be warned, this man has no shame. Not only does he try to portray a God who is remote and unknowable, but also one who does not have perfect knowledge of the future. Contrast his version of Hosea 5:15 with the correct one (see above). How does "they will seek me early" become "maybe they'll come looking for me"? The Word of God is telling us that Israel WILL seek God, that they WILL do so promptly when calamity strikes, and that they WILL acknowledge their offense. Peterson, however, puts all of this in doubt.

He takes what he likes and does what he wants with it, mangling it all together like a sausage, and then claims to be faithful to God's Word! *The Message* should really be called *The Sausage*, a title that better describes its mangled contents.



The LORD's Prayer

We see this most vividly and painfully in his deplorable rendering of Matthew 6:9-13, the passage of Scripture commonly called the Lord's Prayer. Again we are struck by his audacity, his reckless determination to change God's Word no matter how familiar it might be to his readers.

The translators of the KJV set it out simply, powerfully and accurately as follows:

“After this manner therefore pray ye:
Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

We'll now compare it, line by line, with Peterson's profane, paganized version:

1. “With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this:
2. Our Father in heaven, Reveal who you are.
3. Set the world right; Do what's best – as above, so below.
4. Keep us alive with three square meals.
5. Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.
6. Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.
7. You're in charge! You can do anything you want!
8. You're ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes.”

1. “With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply.”

Jesus did not say this or anything like it. By adding these words, Peterson is implying that a ‘loving God’ will give you what you want, without regard to your spiritual condition.

2. “Our Father in heaven, Reveal who you are.”

Jesus did not speak the words, “Reveal who you are.” There is not the slightest suggestion anywhere in his prayer that the believer should expect the Father to “reveal” Himself. These additional words are likely prompted by Peterson's admiration for the Catholic mystics, such as Julian of Norwich, who were constantly pleading with God to give them a ‘mystical’ experience.

The words given by Jesus – “Hallowed be thy name” – are there to honor and praise our heavenly Father. With beautiful simplicity, they turn our attention to God and His infinite holiness. In contrast, Peterson’s version fails to acknowledge the awesome holiness of God but looks instead for a mystical experience.



3. “Set the world right; Do what's best – as above, so below.”

Peterson is now taking the reader even further into the strange world of the contemplative mystic. Compare his words with the KJV: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”

Peterson’s phrase, “Do what’s best”, is a distortion of God’s Word. Everything the Father does is perfect, righteous and just. His will is holy. By asking Him to do what’s best, we are implying that there may conceivably be occasions when He might neglect to do so.

Peterson simply refuses to acknowledge the absolute sovereignty of God.

- “as above, so below”

We find the biggest anomaly of all in the four words at the end: “as above, so below.” Most readers of *The Message* will not have met this expression before and will not know that it is one of the most widely cited maxims in occult philosophy. The physical world is supposed to be a reflection of the higher worlds. If we want to change something in the world around us – they say – we must first visualize the situation we desire and then infuse this imaginary paradigm with emotion and conviction (the occult equivalent of faith). This is supposed to effect a change in the higher worlds which will then carry through into the physical. Thus the expression, “as above, so below.”

How did this pagan foolishness find its way into the Lord's Prayer? How did Peterson see fit to foist on his readers an occult idea which belittles the sovereignty of God and promotes the false notion that man is a god in seed form, a Master-in-training as it were?

4. "Keep us alive with three square meals."

Again we see Peterson turning a simple prayer of supplication into a demand. He even specifies the number of meals we should ask for! Note that the meals are "square", a well-known code word among Freemasons.



Masonic square and compass.

5. "Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others."

Contrast this artificial formulation with the KJV: "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Peterson can't bring himself to use plain English but has to make his version sound more sophisticated. What exactly does "Keep us forgiven with you" actually mean? If we didn't know the correct meaning we would have difficulty finding it in Peterson's muddled version.

His version also includes another awkward request: "Keep us...forgiving others." Again we are obliged to struggle with his pretentious and mannered attempts to avoid the obvious. Whatever it means, it doesn't mean "as we forgive our debtors."

6. "Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil."

There is a wide gulf between "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" and the wording that Peterson adopts. Satan and his schemes are only mentioned in the second part of his version, but they are a factor that must always be kept in mind when we are dealing with temptation. The KJV uses the word "temptation" with this in view, but Peterson drops the word and the idea behind it. Why? Was Judas tempted or did he merely cause trouble for himself? Was Ananias tempted or did he merely cause trouble for himself? And what about Diotrephes and the many Jews who opposed the work of the church in apostolic times?

Jesus is telling us that we can ask our Father in prayer to lead us away from situations where Satan and the world might test us beyond our endurance. Every soldier in Christ needs this kind of protection. But that is not what *The Message* is telling us.

7. “You're in charge! You can do anything you want!”

This is very similar to what the mob would have chanted during the infamous feast of Saturnalia in ancient Rome. One of their number would have been selected to “rule” as he wished for about five days or so, issuing nonsensical orders to high-ranking officials, indulging in lewd and licentious behavior, insulting whom he would with gross vulgarity – all without fear of reprisal. During this short period of chaos, his cronies would remind him, in these or similar words, “You're in charge! You can do anything you want!”



In the ancient pagan view of the world, the golden age of mankind had been ruled by Saturn (Satan). Saturnalia was an annual reminder of that perfect age and a bawdy manifestation of a popular desire to see it restored. The Illuminati today are planning a similar period of chaos, during which the existing world order will be overthrown. Only when this is done, they believe, can the golden age be reinstated.

The words chosen by Peterson to ‘extol’ the kingdom, the power and the glory of our heavenly Father are both flippant and juvenile – and suspiciously close to those of Saturnalia.

8. “You're ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes.”

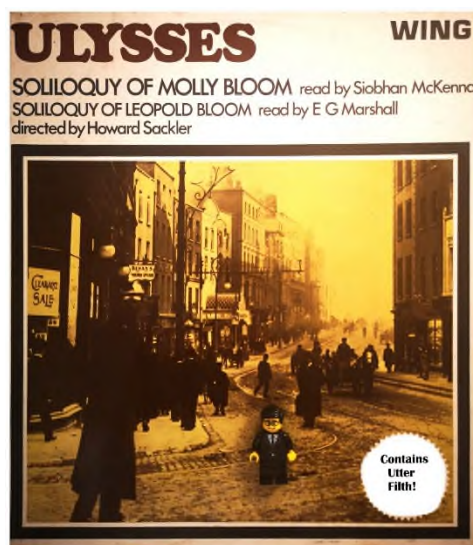
We are expected to believe that Peterson is talking here about the Father, but if we compare his words with Ezekiel 28:17 we will recognize the real object of his admiration:

“Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast
corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.”
(Ezekiel 28:17)

For “ablaze” and “beauty” (Peterson) we have “brightness” and “beauty” (KJV). The KJV is referring to two chief attributes of Satan, but Peterson tries to apply them to the Father. This is an outrageous blasphemy, but nothing Peterson does ought to surprise us. He is playing wicked games with the Word of God.

Note also those strange words, “Yes. Yes. Yes.” In modern pop culture and street lingo they are a sign of unconstrained sensual pleasure, similar to the way “Yes” is repeated throughout Molly Bloom’s soliloquy in the novel *Ulysses* by James Joyce. They denote something earthy and orgasmic, something erotic and intensely feminine. Perhaps Peterson’s subtle slur would pass over the heads of most readers, but they fit well with the general tone of his vulgarized ‘prayer’.

Jesus ended his prayer with the words: “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.” Peterson, on the other hand, ended his ‘prayer’ with a thinly disguised profanity, a blasphemous joke to amuse his Luciferian friends.



Peterson’s strategic distortion of God’s Word

Before we move on to examine the way *The Message* was marketed among Christians and warmly endorsed by the very people who should have condemned it, we will give more evidence of the strategic approach that Peterson took when preparing his translation. Many more examples could be added to those we have chosen.

The New Testament repeats three times a truth which is clearly enunciated in Psalm 16:10 -

“For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;
neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One
to see corruption.”

What a glorious truth is revealed here! The perfection of the work that Christ performed on the cross is brought vividly into view by the fact that, in death, his body did not suffer corruption. Even while his body lay lifeless in the tomb, it did not undergo decay.

By sharing this truth with us, the Word of God is letting us know that, while still nailed to the cross, Christ did everything that needed to be done to redeem mankind. This is why he could say, in his final breath, "It is finished!" (In Aramaic, "*Tetelestai*.")

Let's now see what Peterson did to this verse, as well as the three verses in the New Testament where it is cited:

Psalm 16:10

KJV: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

MESSAGE: "You canceled my ticket to hell – that's not my destination!"

Acts 2:27

KJV: "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

MESSAGE: "I know you'll never dump me in Hades; I'll never even smell the stench of death."

Acts 2:31

KJV: "He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."

MESSAGE: "seeing far ahead, he talked of the resurrection of the Messiah – 'no trip to Hades, no stench of death.'"

Acts 13: 35-37

KJV: "Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption."

MESSAGE: "So also the psalmist's prayer: 'You'll never let your Holy One see death's rot and decay.' "David, of course, having completed the work God set out for him, has been in the grave, dust and ashes, a long time now. But the One God raised up – no dust and ashes for him!

The Message bends the text every way it can to avoid stating that the body of Christ underwent NO CORRUPTION in the grave. The corporeal incorruptibility of Christ was a mark of his deity and the perfection of his work. However, Peterson was determined to obscure these wonderful truths.

In our next example we see him hiding further evidence of the deity of Christ by twisting an important doctrinal expression in the New Testament, not just three or four times, which would be bad enough, but no fewer than **twelve** times!

When the Word of God tells us that our Lord Jesus Christ is now seated at the right hand of his Father, it is saying that Jesus is the Son of God. Only the Son can share the throne and sit on the right hand of the Father.

Sitting on the Right Hand of God

Peterson's deceitfulness is so plainly visible in the following verses that it is hardly necessary to comment on them:

Mark 16:19

KJV: "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and **sat on the right hand of God.**"

MESSAGE: "Then the Master Jesus, after briefing them, was taken up to heaven, and he sat down beside God in the place of honor."

Hebrews 1:3-4

KJV: "Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, **sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high**; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

MESSAGE: "This Son perfectly mirrors God, and is stamped with God's nature. He holds everything together by what he says – powerful words! The Son Is Higher than Angels far higher than any angel in rank and rule."

Colossians 3:1

KJV: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ **sitteth on the right hand of God.**"

MESSAGE: "So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides."

Acts 7:55-56

KJV: “But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and **Jesus standing on the right hand of God**, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the **Son of man standing on the right hand of God.**”

MESSAGE: “But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, hardly noticed – he only had eyes for God, whom he saw in all his glory with Jesus standing at his side. He said, “Oh! I see heaven wide open and the Son of Man standing at God's side!”

Romans 8:34

KJV: “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even **at the right hand of God**, who also maketh intercession for us.”

MESSAGE: “Who would dare even to point a finger? The One who died for us - who was raised to life for us! – is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us.”

Ephesians 1:20

KJV: “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him **at his own right hand** in the heavenly places,”

MESSAGE: “All this energy issues from Christ: God raised him from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven,”

Hebrews 1:13

KJV: “But to which of the angels said he at any time, **Sit on my right hand**, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?”

MESSAGE: “And did he ever say anything like this to an angel? Sit alongside me here on my throne Until I make your enemies a stool for your feet.”

Hebrews 8:1

KJV: “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is **set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;**”

MESSAGE: “In essence, we have just such a high priest: authoritative right alongside God,”

Hebrews 10:12

KJV: “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, **sat down on the right hand of God;**”

MESSAGE: “As a priest, Christ made a single sacrifice for sins, and that was it! Then he sat down right beside God”

Hebrews 12:2

KJV: “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is **set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**”

MESSAGE: “Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed - that exhilarating finish in and with God - he could put up with anything along the way: cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God.”

1 Peter 3:22

KJV: “Who is gone into heaven, and **is on the right hand of God;** angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”

MESSAGE: “Jesus has the last word on everything and everyone, from angels to armies. He's standing right alongside God, and what he says goes.”



**Tyndale
House
Publishers,
Colorado,
home of
NavPress.**

How did *The Message* become so popular?

How did *The Sausage* become so popular? How did something so patently heretical manage to bypass the watchmen on the wall and the sentinels at the door? Where were those whose task it was to warn the church of grievous wolves and lying imposters? Where were our highly esteemed church leaders, our exalted champions of evangelical zeal, when this noxious weed was pushing its way up from the depths of hell?

This is a very solemn question indeed and one that demands an answer.

Let's start with the publisher's claim, reproduced in copies of *The Message*, that the text was "thoroughly reviewed" by 20 top-ranking Biblical scholars. Here is what it says:

Translation Consultants

Peterson's work has been thoroughly reviewed by the following team of recognized Old and New Testament scholars, who ensured that it is accurate as well as faithful to the original languages.

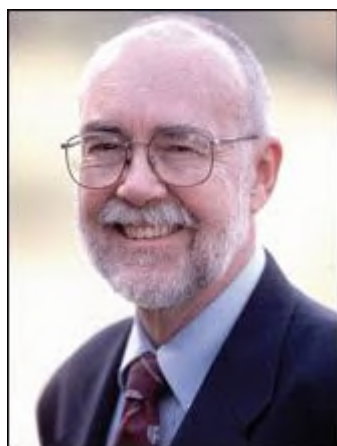
The 20 scholars are listed in *The Message*. We are reproducing their names in order to hold both them and their institutions accountable for their role in this travesty:

Old Testament

Robert L. Hubbard Jr.	North Park Theological Seminary (chair)
Richard E. Averbeck	Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Bryan E. Beyer	Columbia International University
Lamar E. Cooper Sr.	Criswell College
Peter E. Enns	Eastern University
Duane E. Garrett	The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Donald R. Glenn	Dallas Theological Seminary
Paul R. House	Beeson Divinity School, Samford University
V. Phillips Long	Regent College
Tremper Longman III	Westmont College
John N. Oswalt	Asbury Theological Seminary
Richard L. Pratt Jr.	Reformed Theological Seminary
John H. Walton	Wheaton College
Prescott H. Williams Jr.	Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Marvin R. Wilson	Gordon College

New Testament

William W. Klein	Denver Seminary (chair)
Darrell L. Bock	Dallas Theological Seminary
Donald A. Hagner	Fuller Theological Seminary
Moisés Silva	Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
Rodney A. Whitacre	Trinity School for Ministry



**Professor Robert L. Hubbard,
North Park Theological Seminary**



**Professor William W. Klein,
Denver Seminary**

It would be impossible for any academic in this field to claim that Peterson's translation was "accurate as well as faithful to the original languages." The methodology he used – the most extreme form of dynamic equivalence – would rule this out. The subjectivity involved in compiling an idiomatic or vernacular paraphrase is too great to allow a scholar to assess it objectively. The most he could offer is a personal opinion. Therefore the publisher's claim that 20 Bible scholars thoroughly reviewed the text and found it both accurate and faithful to the original languages is grossly misleading. They are trying to pass off a highly subjective paraphrase, riddled throughout with errors and distortions, as a literal translation of the Bible.

By doing this the publishers – NavPress of Colorado Springs, CO – are committing a serious fraud. They are deliberately deceiving the public by passing off a sloppy counterfeit as the genuine article. And in doing so they are making substantial profits. *The Message* and its numerous spin-off products have sold tens of millions of copies, making this one of the most financially rewarding literary scams of the past 20 years. According to Peterson's obituary in *The Washington Post*, *The Message* 'Bible' had sold more than 20 million copies by the time of his death in October 2018.

There was a time when a fraud of this magnitude would have landed the perpetrators in jail, but not anymore. The lying Masonic cabal that control America today are more than happy to see Christianity attacked and disfigured in this way. Blasphemy has never been more profitable.

The ‘Christian’ magazine, *Christianity Today*

Christianity Today has carried regular endorsements and eulogies of *The Message* since it first appeared in 2002. Hardly anyone dares to question its assessment.

The same magazine promotes contemplative spirituality, ecumenism, Roman Catholic mysticism, and much else besides. As we have shown in an earlier paper (#34), it is really a mouthpiece for the Roman Catholic Church, a means of streaming subversive ecumenical propaganda into the minds of unsuspecting evangelicals. For decades the magazine has been a subtle purveyor of heresy, as well as erroneous and misleading material. No doubt it will continue to applaud *The Message* as a ‘Bible’ for the modern age and an inspired contribution to Christian literature.



Some typical covers from the apostate magazine, *Christianity Today*.

Peterson himself said that his book is aimed at two kinds of people: (a) those who have not read the the Bible and (b) those who have read it but find it rather dull. In other words, he wrote it mainly for non-believers. Thus he could rely on the majority of his readers to take his translation at face value and fail to see just how far it deviated from God’s Word.

His strong affinity with contemplative prayer and the writings of the Catholic mystics is evident, not only from his writings, but also from his role as Consulting Editor (New Testament) for the *Renovaré Bible*, a Roman Catholic ‘Bible’ that includes The Apocrypha and promotes the Spiritual Formation movement.

‘Christian’ evangelical leaders

The Message also received a warm welcome from senior Christian leaders when it came on the scene. This roll-call of adulation has continued ever since, with only a handful of dissenting voices. The very people who should have been defending Biblical truth were helping to tear it apart.

The following endorsements are just a fraction of those that have appeared in print since 2002:

“In this crowded world of Bible versions, Eugene Peterson's blend of accurate scholarship and vivid idiom make this rendering both distinctive and distinguished. *The Message* catches the logical flow, personal energy, and imaginative overtones of the original very well indeed. It's a landmark and a triumph. Don't miss it!”

– **J. I. Packer**

“Seems like forever since I’ve picked up a Bible that made the stories so fresh and new. My name is on that long list of folks who love to read *The Message*. What a friend this Bible has become.”

– **Max Lucado**

“*The Message* is a powerful resource for believers and seekers alike – it communicates the unchanging Word of God using language and phrases that all of us can grasp. I highly recommend *The Message* to anyone who wants to make advances in their spiritual journey.”

– **Bill Hybels**

“*The Message* is the boldest and most provocative rendering of the New Testament I’ve ever read.”

– **Warren Wiersbe**

“And that's why I love *The Message* because Eugene Peterson has tried to come up with words that have some life... I just said, "Yes! This is my kind of Bible.”

– **Mike Yaconelli**

“*The Message* is certainly destined to become a devotional classic – not to mention a powerful pastoral tool.”

– **Jack Hayford**

“Wonderfully alive. *The Message* is full of surprises, excitement, and the ring of authentic human speech and feeling.”

– **Frederick Buechner**

“Eugene Peterson’s work is the freshest, most dramatic treatment of Scripture since The Living Bible. I look forward to reading it regularly.”

– **Jerry B Jenkins**

“*The Message* will help many to transfer God's eternal truths to their contemporary lives.”

– **Leighton Ford**

“*The Message* is exegetically sensitive yet speaks in the language of today – with the special flair for English style that has come to mark Peterson’s work.”

– **Gordon Fee**

“*The Message* is so good it leaves me breathless.”

– **Madeleine L’Engle**

“*The Message* offers vibrant language that awakens my heart to the wonders of God’s Word again and again.”

– **Margaret Feinberg**

“Eugene Peterson’s language makes the Bible exciting and strong, sweet, sharp, persuasive, painful, personal, contemporary, kind, and dramatic – and available to every reader of this age.”

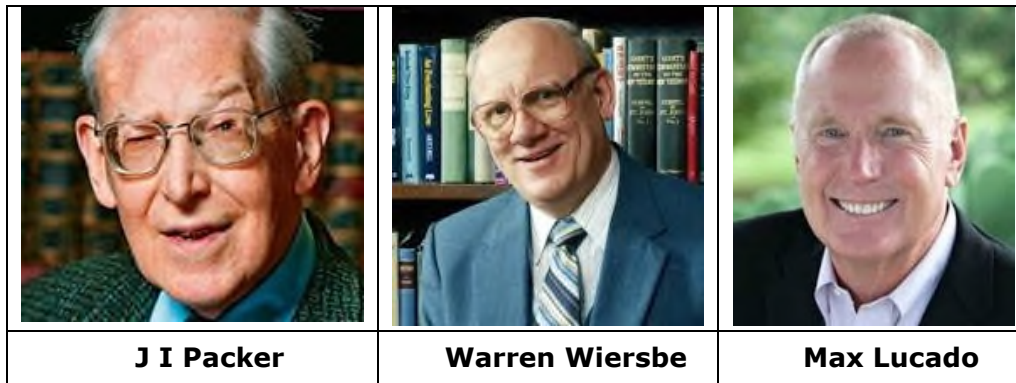
– **Walter Wangerin Jr.**

“I thank God for *The Message*. In it Eugene Peterson gives a fresh and authentic voice to the Scripture. I recommend it highly.”

– **Richard Foster** [promoter of mysticism]

It would have been difficult for the average believer to disregard these endorsements. Most of the authors were seen as staunch defenders of conservative Christianity, men like J I Packer, Warren Wiersbe, and Max Lucado.

According to those who have looked into the matter, *The Message* has also been recommended by the following authors: Benny Hinn, Chuck Swindoll, Joyce Meyer, Kenneth Copeland, Rod Parsley, Tony Campolo, Brian Houston, Vernon Grounds, and Stuart and Jill Briscoe, as well as several in the self-betterment arena, such as Gordon MacDonald, John C Maxwell and Gary Smalley.



To this we may add some leading lights in Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) such as Amy Grant, Phil Driscoll, Bill and Gloria Gaither, Michael Card, Michael W Smith, Don Moen and Rebecca St James, among others. When one considers that CCM is probably the most effective way of channeling error and heresy to young people, these endorsements may prove more influential and more damaging than all the others put together. Consider, for example, the glowing endorsement by Michael Card:

“At last, a translation of tone. I read not only the words, but I hear a voice behind them speaking – as, in fact, all these documents were originally experienced. Peterson’s translation transforms the eye into an ear, opening the door of the New Testament wider than perhaps it has ever been opened.”

Alas, a great many young Christians will read these words, or similar words by Bono of U2, and say, ‘Yeah, *The Message* is for me.’

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the ‘establishment’ which controls evangelical Christianity in the U.S. – to its great detriment – has selected (and possibly commissioned) *The Message* as a key tool in their program to ‘transform’ Christianity and achieve the goals envisaged in their subversive policy document, ‘*Evangelicals and Catholics Together*’ (1994).

It is only reasonable to surmise that they also invited a large number of prominent evangelicals to endorse it. The strangely muted response by those who should have been denouncing this vile work is further evidence of the power exerted by the establishment.

Along the way they also recruited the services of U2 front man, Bono, an Irish rock star, to make *The Message* sound cool among the youth. We can find no evidence that any members of the group U2 are Christian. In fact, their conduct would indicate that they worship the same god as all successful rock performers.

In July 2017, *Premier Christianity* published an article on Eugene Peterson with specific reference to his friendship with Bono:

Fifteen years later, *The Message* was completed and found its way into thousands of homes and churches across the Western world. One of those early readers was Bono – the lead singer of U2. The biggest rock star in the world heaped praise on Peterson’s work, describing it as “a great strength to me” in an interview with *Rolling Stone* back in 2002. At that point, Peterson had never heard of U2 or Bono. But the rock star and the poet have since formed an unlikely friendship. This was documented in a short film released last year by Fuller Studio. The 20-minute video [*which is available on YouTube*] sees the two friends in conversation about their shared love of the Psalms. For Peterson, it was the first book of scripture he fell in love with. For Bono, it’s the book that has inspired so many U2 songs (most notably ‘40’, which is based on Psalm 40). [Note: The interview was conducted by Sam Hailes, the Editor of Premier Christianity, a UK magazine for Christians.]

LINK: <https://www.premierchristianity.com/Past-Issues/2017/July-2017/Eugene-Peterson-The-man-behind-The-Message-on-Psalms-Bono-megachurches-and-his-final-book>

The Elite are continuing to use Bono to spread their phony New Age version of ‘Christianity’, the version that will morph, perhaps fairly quickly, into the coming One World Religion. His cosy fireside chat with Peterson about the Psalms is all part of this carefully managed agenda. No doubt he will give many more public endorsements of *The Message* in the years ahead and encourage the youth of the world to adopt it as their ‘Bible’.

A time will come when those who truly want the literal truth of God’s Word may not be able to find it. We are reminded here of Amos 8:12 – “And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.”

In the same interview Peterson revealed his contempt for Christians who found serious fault with his ‘translation’ -

A few years ago I would get nasty letters about how I was twisting the Bible to my own agenda. I wrote a thing for my publisher to send to them. I said every language is different. You can’t translate the Bible literally from one language to another. If you’re willing to learn Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic, then we can talk about this. But if you’re not willing to learn the language as it’s given in the scriptures, we’re just talking blind. I’ve never got an answer from people like that!

Much the same dismissive answer is given by other scholars who are irritated by concerned Christians. They will only “talk about this” (as Peterson put it) when their critics have learned Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic. Clearly, Peterson thinks we are fools. It doesn’t take a doctorate in linguistics or ancient languages to see that *The Message* is a slipshod, unscholarly, maverick, arrogant and dishonest piece of work.



Before closing...

If only to remind our readers of the tragedy that has befallen the younger generation of Christians through their exposure to subversive works like *The Message*, we offer seven more examples of Peterson’s unprofessional, Scripture-twisting nonsense:

Hosea 12:3

KJV: “He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God:”

MESSAGE: “In the womb, that heel, Jacob, got the best of his brother. When he grew up, he tried to get the best of God.”

This is such an offensive rendering of God’s Word that it should hardly be necessary to explain what’s wrong with it. Alas, for those who have never read the Bible, it might seem to make sense. It mocks Jacob and totally mischaracterizes the man whom God had chosen and thereafter named Israel.

Deuteronomy 32:8

KJV: "When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."

MESSAGE: "When the High God gave the nations their stake, gave them their place on Earth, He put each of the peoples within boundaries under the care of divine guardians."

Who are these "divine guardians"? Could they be the 'Ascended Masters' of the New Age? And how did they find their way into God's Word?

1 Corinthians 10:17

KJV: "For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

MESSAGE: "Because there is one loaf, our many-ness becomes one-ness – Christ doesn't become fragmented in us. Rather, we become unified in him. We don't reduce Christ to what we are; he raises us to what he is."

Here we have more of Peterson's 'little gods.' Since Christ "raises us to what he is" then we too are 'gods'.

The concept of Oneness is central to the New Age, an all-encompassing wholeness whereby all beings participate in divinity. This is pantheism or panentheism, but NOT Christianity. Christ came to free us from these lies and to save us from the Great Liar who forged them.

Matthew 5:44

KJV: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"

MESSAGE: "I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer,"

MESSAGE: "When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer for that person." (Luke 6:28)

The New Age teaches about The Force, the vital creative energy or Prana that supposedly permeates the universe. In their philosophy prayer is a means of manipulating or directing The Force, often in a way that requires imagination and focused attention, a skill which one is expected to develop over time through meditation, contemplation and yoga. Peterson's expression, "energies of prayer", is drawn directly from that philosophy.

Romans 15:13

KJV: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

MESSAGE: "Oh! May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!"

The 'green man' or fertility god of ancient paganism has become part of the iconography of the environmental or 'Green' movement. He is also well known among Wiccans, who use him as a more acceptable representation of Pan. Here is how Wikipedia put it:

"For many modern Pagans, the Green Man is used as a symbol of seasonal renewal and ecological awareness. In Wicca, the Green Man has often been used as a representation of the Horned God, a syncretic deity that appropriates aspects of, among others, the Celtic Cernunnos and the Greek Pan."



'The Green Man' installed in Woburn Square, Bloomsbury, London in 1999.

The Green Man symbolizes hope and glad expectation, when the moribund earth, frozen in winter, awakens with fresh green growth in early spring. The Green Man is therefore ‘the god of green hope’.

So what is this ‘god’ doing in *The Message*? Seemingly to fill us with “life-giving energy”.

Is there no limit to this man’s arrogance?

Micah 7:14

KJV: “Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.”

MESSAGE: “Shepherd, O God, your people with your staff, your dear and precious flock. Uniquely yours in a grove of trees, centered in lotus land. Let them graze in lush Bashan as in the old days in green Gilead.”

Any time the word *asherah* appears in the Hebrew text, the translators of the KJV rendered it into English with the word “grove”. Most Christians know that an *asherah* is a pagan shrine, usually comprising pillars, poles, or a grove of trees. Every ‘high place’ mentioned in the Bible would have had an *asherah* of some kind.

This symbol of paganism, which exalts Baal or the ‘Green Man’, is so offensive to God that the Book of Deuteronomy commanded that an *asherah* should not be erected anywhere in the vicinity of the Temple:

“Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.”
(Deuteronomy 16:21)

Given that a place of idol worship was not to be tolerated anywhere in the land of Israel, this additional prohibition may have seemed unnecessary. By including it in His Word, the LORD was showing the children of Israel just how offensive these idolatrous shrines and pagan places are in His eyes.

As an experienced scholar Peterson would have known all this, but he also knew that most of his readers would not and that they would miss the pagan embellishment which he smuggled into Micah 7:14. In his twisted formulation, “a grove of trees” becomes a place that is pleasing to both God and man. He then pours oil on the fire by placing the grove of trees in “lotus land”. For sheerchutzpah, this takes some beating! The lotus, of course, is the great symbol of enlightenment in both Hinduism and Buddhism, while “lotus land” is a way of describing the home of the Ascended Masters.

Matthew 5:15

KJV: “Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.”

MESSAGE: “If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand.”

When Christina Stoddard published her book *Light Bearers of Darkness* in 1930, under the pen-name ‘Inquire Within’, she was trying to alert the public to the existence and goals of the Illuminati. She chose that title because many practitioners of the occult, whether members of secret societies or initiatory paths, liked to describe themselves as “light-bearers”. They naively imagined that they channelled a portion of divine light when, in reality, as Ms Stoddard understood, they were connecting themselves with the false light of Lucifer.

The name Lucifer actually means “light bearer”.

Peterson would have known this, and yet he translates Matthew 5:15 to imply that Jesus wants all born-again Christians to be “light-bearers”. He even words it in such a way that man himself becomes the embodiment of divine light; in effect, a ‘little god’.

Mister Twister has no shame.



We call on the publisher NavPress to withdraw this wicked book. If they are in the business of promoting New Age philosophy, then they are legally obliged under trade description legislation to disclose the fact in any relevant published material. It is a criminal offense to defraud members of the public by marketing a book which purports to be a translation of the Bible when obviously it is not. The fraud is exacerbated by their clear intention to target members of the public with a product which is not only mislabeled but whose contents are deliberately designed to deceive the reader and corrupt his or her religious beliefs.

We also call on all pastors, preachers and church elders to publicly condemn *The Message*, explaining (with evidence) why it cannot be trusted and why it should not under any circumstances be considered a Bible or a translation of the Bible.

Finally, we call on our brothers and sisters in Christ to warn fellow believers and let them know that *The Message* is a dangerous, deceitful and blasphemous work.

“Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him [Elymas, the sorcerer], And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?”

– Acts 13:9-10

**Jeremy James
Ireland
January 1, 2020**

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